

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DACCA 02288 291203Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----301246Z 048949 /53

R 291000Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4448  
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T DACCA 2288

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN  
SUBJECT: INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER ON FARAKKA

REF: DACCA 2078

1. AMBASSADOR HAS HAD TWO CONVERSATIONS WITH INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER MENON IN THE LAST TWO DAYS ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS IN THE FARAKKA NEGOTIATIONS. OTHER EMBOFFS HAVE ALSO TALKED TO MEMBERS OF MENON'S STAFF.
2. MENON SAID THAT THE INDIAN CONCEPTION OF THE NEXT (AND THEY WOULD HOPE, FINAL) ROUND WOULD BE AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION TO NEW DELHI LED BY FOREIGN SECRETARY TABARAK HUSAIN. MENON EXPECTED THE DELEGATION TO LEAVE TODAY (APRIL 29). THE BANGLADESHIS HAVE DELAYED THE DEPARTURE UNTIL MAY 6, AT THE EARLIEST, AND HAVE NAMED WATER AND POWER ADVISER ABBAS TO LEAD IT.
3. THE INDIANS BELIEVE THAT NOW A POLITICAL SOLUTION SHOULD BE PUT INTO FINAL FORM AND THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF ABBAS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 DACCA 02288 291203Z

WILL SIDE TRACK DISCUSSIONS INTO TECHNICAL HAGGLING WHICH CAN ONLY DELAY AGREEMENT. ABBAS HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH FARAKKA DISCUSSIONS FOR MANY YEARS AND, ALTHOUGH REPUTEDLY A GOOD ENGINEER, HAS NOT THE POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC SKILL NEEDED NOW TO CAP THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE ZIA-JAGJIVAN RAM MEETING HERE IN DACCA.

4. MENON IS CONTINUING TO PRESS FOR AN OFFICIAL LEVEL DELEGATION, BUT SO FAR HAS BEEN UNABLE TO BUDGE BANGLADESHIS. MENON, IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S INQUIRY ABOUT PRESSURES BUILDING IN WEST BENGAL AGAINST SETTLEMENT, SAID THAT JAGJIVAN RAM HAD TOLD BANGLADESHIS WHO WONDERED ABOUT SAME SUBJECT, "I CAN HANDLE WEST BENGAL". MENON POINTED OUT THAT JAGJIVAN'S ABILITY TO "HANDLE" CALCUTTA WAS NOT OPEN ENDED AS TO TIME AND THAT A SIGNED AGREEMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED QUITE SOON.

5. INDIAN DHC BANERJEE TOLD EMBOFF EVENING OF APRIL 28, THAT DELEGATION WOULD LEAVE SOME TIME NEXT WEEK AND WOULD BE AT TECHNICAL LEVEL. EARLIER IN DAY ANOTHER EMBOFF AND VISITING DESK OFFICER WERE GIVEN SOME DETAILS OF AGREEMENT AS INDIANS UNDERSTAND IT BY INDIAN POLOFF. THESE CONFORMED CLOSELY TO THOSE REPORTED IN REFTEL. POLOFF CONFIRMED THAT TANGLE HAD BEEN BROKEN DURING JAGJIVAN'S UNSCHEDULED THREE HOUR MEETING WITH ZIA ON APRIL 18 AND IMPLIED THAT EARLIER MEETINGS WITH KHAN HAD NOT BEEN PRODUCTIVE.

6. COMMENT: MENON IS CLEARLY A BIT PESSIMISTIC AS RESULT OF DELAY IN BDG DELEGATION AND IN ITS MAKE UP WITH TECHNICAL MAN AT HEAD. WE SPECULATE, HOWEVER, THAT BDG MAY BE DELAYING IN ORDER TO SEE HOW BORDER TALKS IN NEW DELHI APRIL 28 AND 29 HAVE GONE WE ASSUME GENERAL DASTAGIR WOULD RETURN THIS EVENING. BANGLADESHIS MAY WISH TO BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE BOTH BORDER AND FARAKKA AGREEMENTS AT SAME TIME, ESPECIALLY AS IT IS CLEAR THET BDG HAS NOT (AND CANNOT) OBTAIN INDIAN CONCESSION ON  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03     DACCA 02288 291203Z

FARAKKA TO EXTENT OF BDG "DEMANDS". THUS IF DASTAGIR'S TALKS WENT WELL, MENON'S PESSIMISM MAY BE PREMATURE. BDG HAS NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED ITS FARAKKA DELEGATION AND COULD, WE ASSUME, SUBSTITUTE FOREIGN SECRETARY FOR ABBAS IF THAT SEEMED TO BDG TO BE DESIRABLE.  
MASTERS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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